THANOS
#4
LEMIRE
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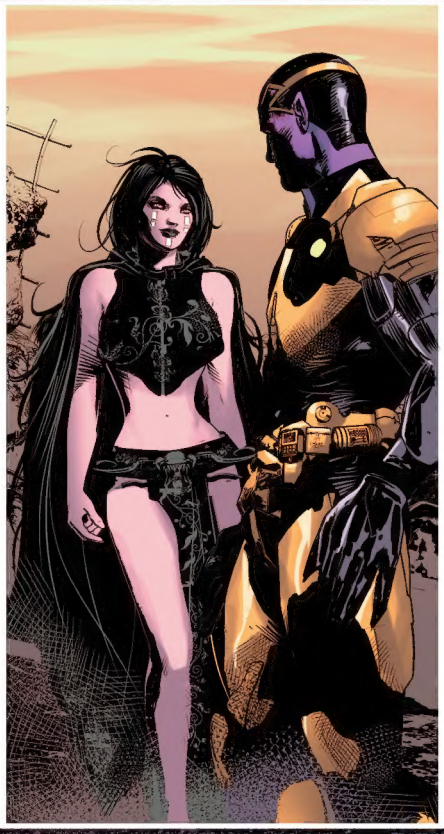
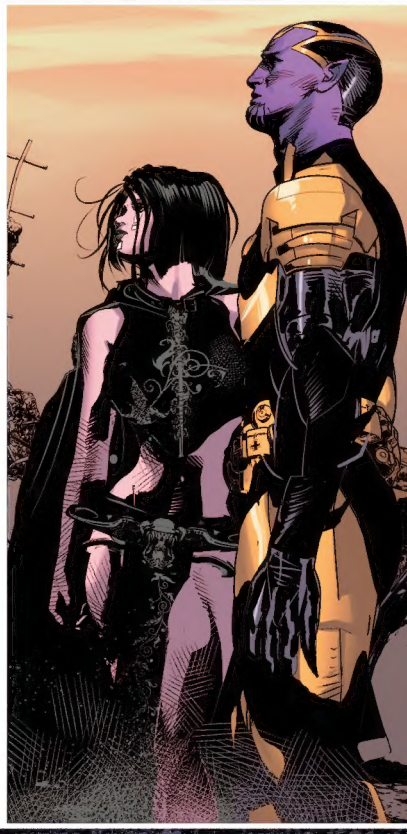
MARTIN
MARVEL

A total obsession with power drives him—to control the forces of the universe.
He is the Mad Titan. He is…

THANOS





Thanos has killed the usurper Corvus Glaive and regained his throne in the Black Quadrant—but even as he retakes power, the ultimate challenge remains: his own mortality. The Mad Titan… is dying. He's rampaged across the galaxy looking for a cure—unstoppable—until he was attacked by the entire Shi'ar Imperial Guard. As Thanos faces these foes and the disease destroying his body, his own son Thane also seeks to kill him. But this is far from the first time that Thane has sought to seize power and exact the ultimate revenge…

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8 MONTHS AGO.
YES! DESTROY THEM ALL, THANE! THE BLACK QUADRANT WILL BE YOURS! THIS PLACE IS YOUR BIRTHRIGHT!
ARRRGHH!
THIS PLACE WAS ONCE YOUR FATHER'S STRONGHOLD. NOW IT CAN BE YOURS. IT IS YOUR LEGACY AND YOUR DESTINY! CAN'T YOU FEEL IT, THANE?
YES!

ARE YOU THAT WEAK-WILLED, BOY? DO YOU NOT REALIZE EBONY MAW IS SIMPLY USING YOU? HE WANTS THIS QUADRANT FOR *HIS OWN.*

CORVUS GLAIVE! THIS PLACE WAS NEVER YOURS FOR THE TAKING! IT BELONGED TO OUR MASTER, THANOS.

IT IS THANE'S BY BIRTHRIGHT! I AM SIMPLY HELPING HIM BECOME WHAT HE WAS MEANT *TO BE!*

CAREFUL, MAW. LET ME--

NO! LEAVE CORVUS GLAIVE TO ME.

WE WERE ONCE BROTHERS IN THE *BLACK ORDER.* DID YOU REALLY THINK I DID NOT KNOW WHAT YOU WERE PLANNING?

DID YOU REALLY THINK I WOULD NOT BE PREPARED FOR THIS ATTACK?

T-THE COVEN?! HOW?! THEY ARE LONG GONE!

NOT *THAT*

LONG GONE

BLACK TONGUE.

WH-WHAT ARE THEY?!

THE ASTRAL COVEN.

SISTERS OF THE STARS.

THE *OLDEST* MAGIC THERE IS.

THERE IS NO POWER

WE HAVE NOT YET FACED

AND NOT YET LEARNED TO TAKE.

ARRRRGHHHH!

NO!

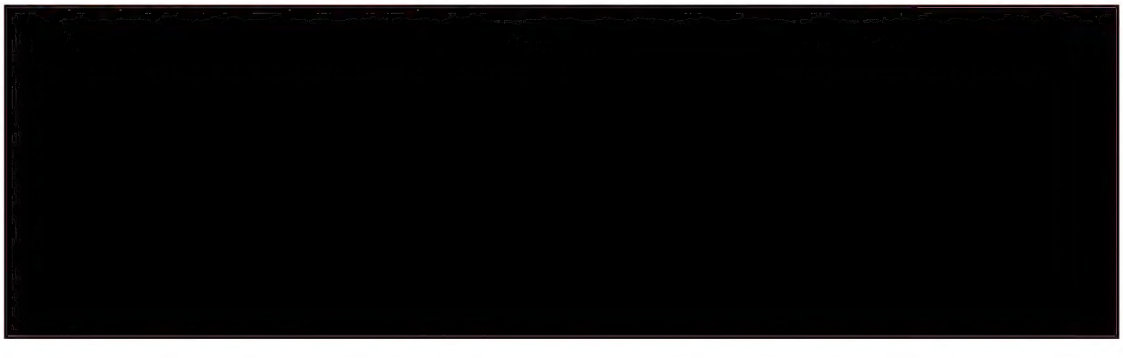
YES, LITTLE WORM. YOUR PLAYTHING IS POWERLESS.

THE SON OF THANOS
HAS FALLEN.
NO MAD TITAN, THIS ONE.

CORVUS, PLEASE, LISTEN TO ME--
YOU HAVE SPOKEN ENOUGH, EBONY MAW. IF YOU TRY TO SPEAK AGAIN, I WILL TAKE YOUR TONGUE.

TAKE HIM!
UNGH!

H-HELP!
HELP ME!

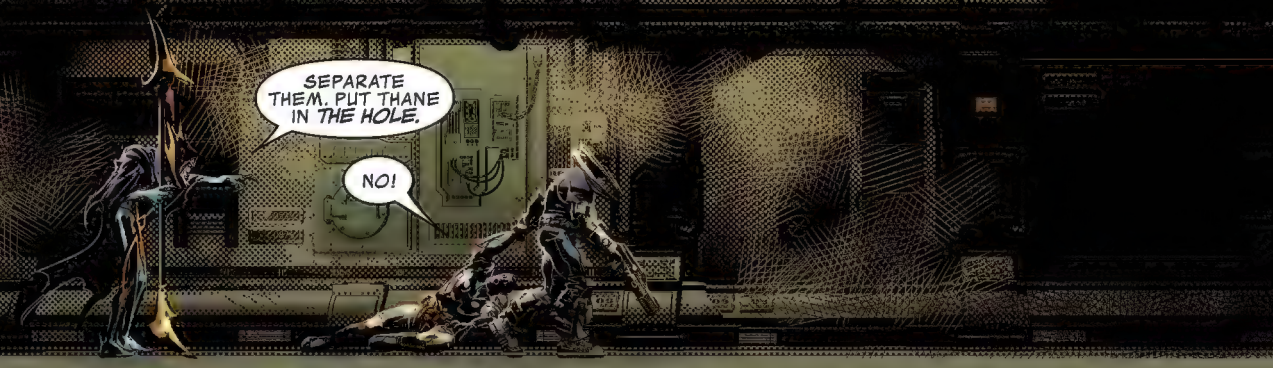


7 MONTHS AGO.
HEY, "SON OF THANOS," YOU BETTER MOVE OVER--THIS CELL IS ABOUT TO GET A LITTLE MORE CRAMPED.
UNHAND ME, YOU FILTHY SLUG! THIS IS NO WAY TO TREAT AN ELDER OF THE UNIVERSE!
GET IN THERE AND SHUT UP, SLATTERUS.
I'LL HAVE BOTH OF YOUR HEADS!
AND NOT JUST YOU TWO! YOU TELL YOUR BOSS! TELL THE BIG BAD CORVUS GLAIVE THAT TRYCO SLATTERUS, THE CHAMPION OF THE UNIVERSE, WILL HAVE HIS REVENGE!
UH-HUH. SURE, PAL. WHATEVER.

AH, HELLO THERE. DIDN'T SEE YOU COWERING IN THE SHADOWS, LITTLE MAN.
THE NAME IS SLATTERUS. TRYCO SLATTERUS. BUT MANY KNOW ME AS THE CHAMPION OF THE UNIVERSE.
UM, YEAH, I HEARD.
RIGHT, OF COURSE. WELL, THIS PLACE IS A REAL DUMP, ISN'T IT? SMELLS LIKE A ZOMPMUTT FART, TOO.
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN STUCK IN HERE...?
THANE. MY NAME IS THANE.
AND... I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I'VE BEEN HERE. WEEKS? IT--IT'S HARD TO TELL.
THANE? AS IN THE PUP OF THANOS HIMSELF? HA! I HEARD ABOUT YOU, BOY!
Y-YOU HAVE?
SURE! WORD OF YOUR "CONQUESTS" SPREAD AROUND PRETTY QUICK.
BUT, UH, I SEE THINGS DIDN'T GO SO WELL, EH? NOT QUITE YOUR DADDY, ARE YOU?
NO. I AM NOT MY FATHER. DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?
WHOA! NO PROBLEM. RELAX, LITTLE MAN. NO HARM, NO FOUL, EH?
JUST--JUST DON'T TALK TO ME, OKAY? I WAS DOING FINE BEFORE YOU SHOWED UP.
HUMPH! SUITS ME FINE!

JUST, UH, ONE MORE THING?
:SIGH: WHAT?
WHEN DO THEY FEED YOU IN THIS DUMP, ANYWAY?
SLOP IN THE MORNING. SLOP AT NIGHT.
NIGHT SLOP ISN'T DUE FOR A WHILE.
WELL, THEN IT'S A GOOD THING I MANAGED TO SNEAK *THIS* IN PAST GLAIVE'S GUARDS WHEN THEY SHOOK ME DOWN.
WHAT? THOUGHT YOU WERE DOING *JUST FINE* WITHOUT OL' TRYCO. HUH?
AH, HELL, HERE YOU GO, *NOT* THANOS.
GUESS WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER, HUH?

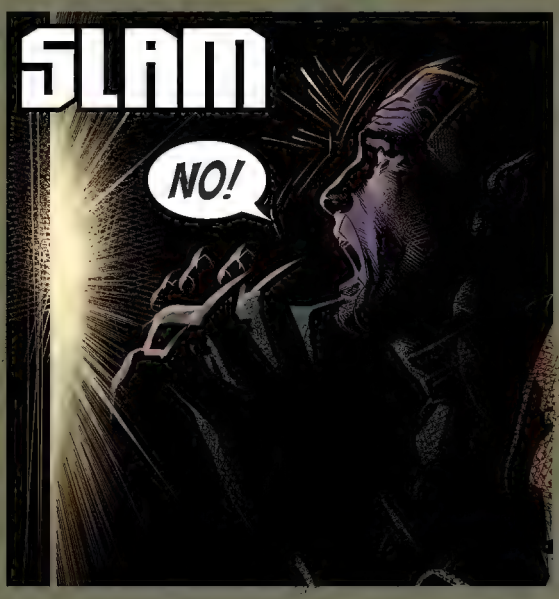
6 MONTHS AGO.
COME ON...
BAH!
YES! THAT'S NINES, THANE! ANOTHER WIN FOR TRYCO SLATTERUS, THE CHAMPION OF CROSS AND STONES!
NO, NO. I'M AFRAID THIS WON'T DO AT ALL.
YOU ARE MEANT TO SUFFER HERE, THANE, SON OF THANOS, NOT MAKE FRIENDS.
STAY DOWN, SLATTERUS!
KZZZT
ARRRGH!


SEPARATE THEM. PUT THANE IN THE HOLE.
NO!

GET IN!
PLEASE! PLEASE, DON'T DO THIS!
SHUT UP!

I'M BEGGING YOU, CORVUS GLAIVE... I--I WILL SERVE YOU. I WILL DO ANYTHING. JUST LET ME GO. DON'T DO THIS.

YOU BEG LIKE A DOG. YOU BEG LIKE I ONCE DID AROUND YOUR FATHER.
BUT THE GREAT THANOS TAUGHT ME MUCH. HE TAUGHT ME TO NEVER SHOW MERCY.


SLAM
NO!

5 MONTHS AGO.

KRKT

WHA--

GOT YOU!

4 MONTHS AGO.

PLEASE. PLEASE, SOMEONE HELP ME.

I WILL HELP YOU.

3 MONTHS AGO.

OPEN YOURSELF, THANE. LET ME IN.

SHUT UP! YOU'RE NOT REAL!

I AM AS REAL AS YOU WILL ALLOW ME TO BE. AND IF YOU DON'T START BELIEVING, YOU WILL DIE IN HERE, THANE.

BE QUIET! EBONY MAW WILL COME BACK FOR ME. HE WILL HELP ME!

EBONY MAW TALKED HIMSELF OUT OF GLAIVE'S CUSTODY MONTHS AGO. HE IS LONG GONE. YOU ARE ALONE...

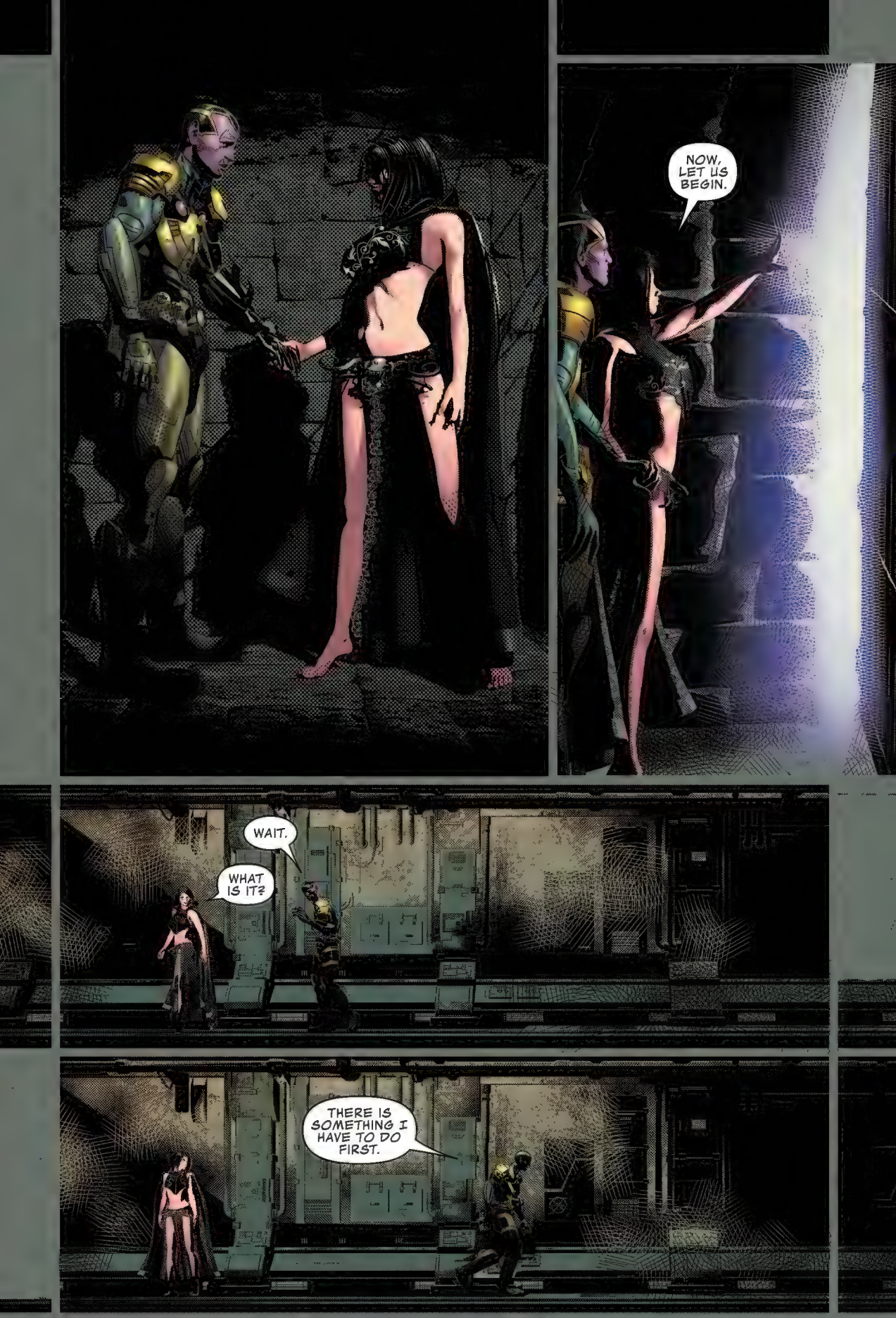
NO!

YES. YOU ARE ALL ALONE EXCEPT FOR ME.

YOUR FATHER NEVER WANTED YOU. EBONY MAW DIDN'T WANT YOU. BUT I DO...

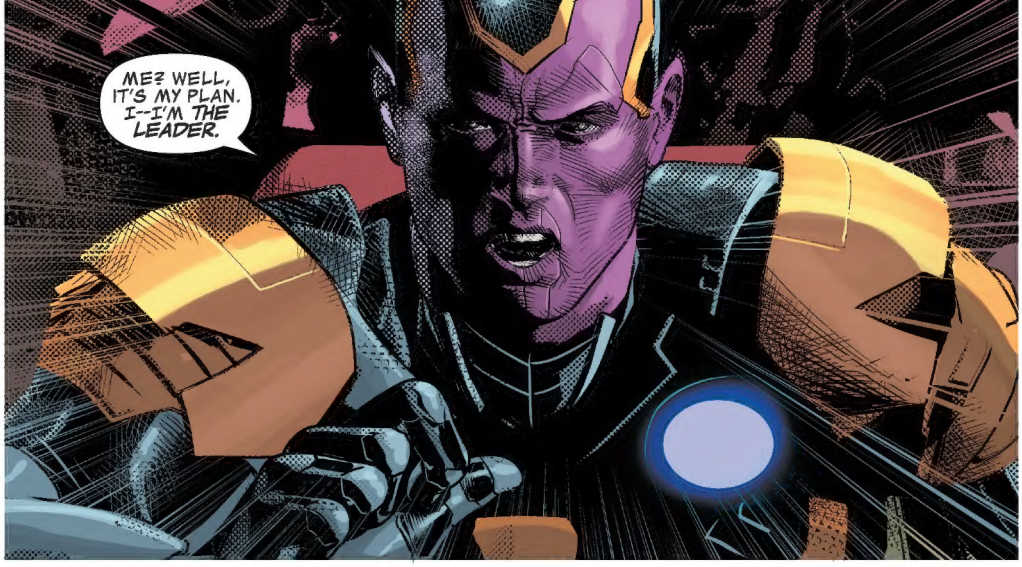
...I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU, THANE.

W-WHO ARE YOU?
DEEP IN YOUR HEART, YOU ALREADY KNOW WHO I AM...
I AM THE DEATH OF EVERYTHING.
HAVE YOU COME TO KILL ME?
NO, SWEET BOY. I'VE COME TO FREE YOU. TO FREE YOU FROM YOURSELF. TO FREE YOU FROM YOUR TERRIBLE BURDEN.
AND IT IS A TERRIBLE BURDEN, ISN'T IT? THIS BIRTHRIGHT OF YOURS?
YES.
THEN LET ME TAKE IT FROM YOU.
WHY? WHY WOULD YOU HELP ME?
TELL ME, WHAT DO YOU WANT? WHAT DO YOU WANT MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN THE UNIVERSE?
I--I WANT TO KILL MY FATHER. I WANT TO KILL THANOS.
WE WANT THE SAME THING. THAT IS WHY I WILL HELP YOU KILL HIM.
BUT HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO DO THAT? I LOST ALL MY POWER. I AM NOTHING.
POWER IS A FUNNY THING, THANE. YOU SAW YOURSELF HOW EASILY IT CAN BE LOST. BUT IT CAN ALSO BE GIVEN...FOUND AGAIN.
IF YOU COME WITH ME, I WILL HELP YOU FIND POWER. GREAT POWER. AND TOGETHER WE WILL KILL THANOS.
DO YOU WANT THIS?
YES. MORE THAN ANYTHING.
COME, THANE, LET ME TAKE YOU FROM THIS PLACE. LET ME MAKE ALL THE PAIN AND HUNGER AND ANGER GO AWAY.
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS GIVE YOURSELF TO ME. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS BECOME MINE.


NOW, LET US BEGIN.
WAIT.
WHAT IS IT?
THERE IS SOMETHING I HAVE TO DO FIRST.

TRYCO.
THANE? IS THAT REALLY YOU, BOY? AM I DREAMING THIS?
HONESTLY, I DON'T KNOW. BUT I THINK IT'S REAL. I THINK I'M FREE. AND I CAN FREE YOU, TOO. BUT FIRST I NEED TO KNOW SOMETHING...
DO YOU WANT TO HELP ME DO SOMETHING TRULY GREAT, TRYCO?
DO YOU WANT TO *REALLY* BE A CHAMPION?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, BOY? HAVE YOU GONE MAD? WHAT IS IT YOU WANT US TO DO?
WE ARE GOING TO *KILL* A GOD.

NOW.
TRYCO AND I HAVE GATHERED YOU HERE FOR A REASON. DO YOU WANT TO SPEND THE REST OF YOUR DAYS STEALING CARGO FROM TWO-BIT BOUNTY HUNTERS? DO YOU WANT TO WASTE YOUR LIVES WHORING AND DRINKING AND WASTING AWAY IN BROTHELS?
OR DO YOU WANT TO BE SOMETHING MORE? DO YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING GREAT?
SAY WE DO AGREE TO JOIN YOU IN THIS MADNESS. HOW WILL WE STRIKE?
HE'S RIGHT. SURELY FACING THANOS HEAD-ON, EVEN IF HE IS WEAK, IS SUICIDE.
YOU'RE BOTH RIGHT. THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE WE'LL NEED. SOMETHING THAT I NEED YOU TO STEAL...FROM TERRAX THE TERRIBLE.
TRYCO AND I HAVE SOME VERY SOLID INTEL THAT TERRAX HAS ONE OF THANOS' OLD LIEUTENANTS IN CUSTODY ON HIS WARSHIP.
THIS MERC WAS HEARD BRAGGING THAT HE KNOWS A BACK DOOR INTO THE HEART OF THE BLACK QUADRANT.
SO WE GO IN AND GET THIS GUY AND HIS INTEL. THEN WE HIT AN ALREADY WEAK THANOS BEFORE HE EVEN KNOWS WE'RE COMING?
PRECISELY, NEBULA. WHICH IS WHERE YOU COME IN. IF ANYONE CAN FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET PAST TERRAX'S DEFENSES AND KIDNAP THE PRISONER, IT'S YOU.
EROS, YOU'RE THE DISTRACTION. YOU GO TO TERRAX ON A "DIPLOMATIC MISSION"--KEEP HIM BUSY WHILE NEBULA AND TRYCO BREAK INTO HIS GULAG.
AND IF IT ALL GOES BAD, YOU'RE ALSO THE MUSCLE, UNCLE. YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE OF US POWERFUL ENOUGH TO HOLD OFF TERRAX.
AND WHAT ABOUT YOU? WHY DO WE NEED YOU, THANE?


ME? WELL, IT'S MY PLAN. I--I'M THE LEADER.

THE LEADER? HA! I THINK NOT, LITTLE NEPHEW. I NEED NO LEADER.

HA HA! GIMME A BREAK, KID. YOU NEED US MORE THAN WE NEED YOU. LET'S JUST GET THAT STRAIGHT.

LET THEM HAVE THEIR FUN, MY LOVE.

SOON, YOU WILL BE THE ONLY ONE LAUGHING...

WE ARE SO CLOSE NOW. THEY ARE ONLY PAWNS. SEE, THANE. SEE WHAT IS TO COME...

ONE WEEK FROM NOW.
"...SEE THE FUTURE. SEE THE DEATH OF A GOD AND THE BIRTH OF A GOD."
TO BE CONTINUED...

THANOS

Guys, that issue had EVERYTHING. The Champion. Space candy bars. A battle between Black Order Brothers. And how'd you like The Coven? To me, they felt like they instantly belonged in the cosmic universe. I wouldn't be surprised if they end up on the "Mandela Effect" Snopes page in a couple years, when we remember them as being a major part of the "Magus Saga." Letters, away!

Wow! What a captivating story! As a longtime reader of Marvel comics and a HUGE fan of Thanos, I really must say that the team behind this series did an AMAZING job portraying the power that is The Mad Titan. Mike Deodato really expresses that sheer power in his art, which reminds me of THE INFINITY GAUNTLET. I also enjoy how Jeff Lemire is exploring a side of Thanos that we haven't seen before: MORTALITY. All in all, I will most definitely be adding this series to my list!

Keep up the great work!

Anthony B

Yep, there's just no beating Mr. Deodato on this book. So glad to hear we're meeting the exacting standards of longtime Thanos fans, Anthony!

Well, I enjoyed THANOS #1 a lot!! Keen to see what happens next and hope to see Thanos do more hand-to-hand fighting with some other big bad evil-doing space scum. Also, any chance of Beta Ray Bill making a fighting appearance? ...A.K.A. please!!

Thanks again for the great comic. Looking forward to what's next.

From,
Sam Cripps
Adelaide, Australia

On the hand-to-hand fighting front, you have A LOT to look forward to, Sam! But if you want some Beta Ray Bill action, there's no need to wait! Be sure to check him out in UNWORTHY THOR!

To the THANOS crew:

Awesome first issue of the Mad Titan being unleashed into the Marvel Universe as a free agent. I think of your work with DARTH VADER, which I have every issue of, and which is an awesome series even with your being handicapped by Vader being locked into a position where you knew what the end would be. I would love to see a series of Vader, maybe after he turned and supposedly goes after the Jedi across the universe to slaughter them (or was that my dream), showing the real dark side of him when he was filled with rage and overwhelming power. That would be excellent. Back to the Mad Titan, I am sure you guys got the call 'cause you guys got the talent to make the bad guys look good, even when they are doing bad. You got to love that about certain villains, and you guys bring out the best, or should I say worst. Keep up the great work.

Danny

It's a great time to be a bad guy in the Marvel Universe, for sure. But we've been lucky to have smart writers and absurdly well-suited artists on VADER and THANOS. I don't know what stories about Darth Vader we have yet to tell, but we can make sure THANOS has enough rage and darkness for two books about bad, bad dudes!

Hi,

I know this is a clichéd thing to write: Longtime reader (30 years plus) but first-time writer.

However, this comic is a revelation for me. I've just finished issue #2! It's Marvel at its retro best. I grew up reading Marvel UK, but mastered Marvel reading '90s cosmic, and this title is a genuine throwback to those characters and style of storytelling I loved. I have always adored Deodato's realistic artwork, but having it accompanied by actual narration is a great thing to see return. It may be considered old fashioned storytelling by todays "trendy" writers but I wholeheartedly disagree!

Coupled with proper, classic Marvel cosmic characters and an authentically written Thanos, I reckon we are onto a winner!

It's how Marvel cosmic should be written. Not as a soap opera or as homage to the MCU in order to cater to casual readers, but for those diehard readers who remember Ron Lim and still crave Starlin's distinct brand of storytelling!

I can't say how much I've waited for a title like this. I love THE ULTIMATES, but it still feels too Earthbound (I mean, T'Challa actually thinking he could outwit Thanos??) Just promise me one thing…don't kill off The Champion! I've waited years for his return and he has been so underused as a cosmic powerhouse.

One question...I have all 12 issues of Thanos' original series, and we have yet to see a return for Hunger...could we perhaps see a resolution to that lingering storyline?

Don't cancel this after 8 issues!!!

Cheers,
Wayne Hardy
Oxford, England

Wayne, how good was Tryco in this issue? Look, nothing's off-limits when Thanos is facing the impossible, but I can promise you that we love The Champion, and we're going to make him look good. Tell your friends!

Two issues into the new THANOS series. This is Marvel comics the way they should be. 'Nuff said!

Anthony Thomas

There's no arguing with a 'nuff, Anthony!

That'll do it this time, Thanosthusiasts. Keep those letters coming in. You're going to want to say something when you see how brutal our next issue is!

See you soon!

Kathleen

NEXT MONTH:

Send letters to **MHEROES@MARVEL.COM** or **135 W 50th St., 7th Floor, New York, NY 10020.** (Please mark **"OKAY TO PRINT."**)